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AUTHOR Tafel, Linda S.
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ABSTRACT

The following questions are addressed in this paper: (1) What should be the goals for teacher education as we move into the twenty-first century? (2) Given the present organizational framework for teacher education, how is change which is responsive to the future needs of teachers and learners possible? How can such changes be planned and implemented? (3) Which components of our traditional model of teacher education need to be re-examined as we plan for change? What organizational patterns are more appropriate for the future? (4) What should be the role of research in teacher education? and (5) How must leaders within teacher education institutions approach change in a proactive, futuristic way? (JD)

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PLANNING FOR AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE:

SOME NEW FUNDAMENTALS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Linda S. Tafel
Graduate Faculty
Curriculum and Instruction
National College of Education
Evanston, Illinois 60201

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Planning for an Uncertain Future: Some New Fundamentals for Teacher Education

Linda S. Tafel
National College of Education

An examination of the major studies and reports concerning the preparation of educational professionals reveals that several issues have continued to be at the center of criticism during the period of 1920 until the present. The most fundamental of these issues involves the identification of the basic goals, aims, or objectives for teacher education programs. While the amount of liberal arts background for education majors, the role of clinical experiences as part of the preparation programs, the sequence and arrangement of course work, and the length of preparation programs continue to be the focus of debate in teacher education circles (Corrigan, Palmer, & Alexander, 1982), "the question of which educational, moral and political commitments ought to guide our work" (Zeichner, 1983, p. 8) remains unanswered.

Before leaders in teacher education can begin to plan for and implement change in programs or institutions, they must carefully consider the fundamental assumptions which are to underlie preparation programs. Those who have discussed societal change and the likely direction which the future will take can offer an important perspective as we consider present programs and plan for future directions for teacher education.

There are fundamental contradictions between the aims for education identified by futures researchers and those selected in the majority of existing teacher education programs. My analysis of the literature dealing both with the development of teacher education programs and with the criticisms of these programs (Tafel, 1982) revealed the following:

1. The thrust of teacher education programs in the United States has been and continues to be that of socializing preservice teachers into the profession and perpetuating the status quo.

2. The elements of the typical teacher education sequence--subject matter, pedagogy, practice teaching--have remained unchanged since the Normal School era.

3. The fundamental goals for teacher education have remained unsettled; however, the profession has become increasingly standardized in its approach to credentialing. This phenonmenon is due, in large part, to the common thrust of the various controlling agencies for teacher education which act as gatekeepers for the profession.

4. The profession has studied itself, has been studied by those outside the profession, and has been severely criticized by scholars, researchers, and the general public. While criticisms have often been acknowledged as valid, the

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profession, as a whole, seems preoccupied with meeting present challenges by retaining past practices--often claiming to do more of the same, only better.

In light of these contradictions, and in response to what Zeichner has called "the practice of merely dwelling on which procedures and organizational arrangements will most effectively help us realize tacit and often unexamined ends," (1983, p. 8). I would like to consider some prior questions, some new fundamentals for teacher education.

The four questions to be addressed in my presentation today are:

1. What should be the goals for teacher education as we move into the twenty-first century?
2. Given the present organizational framework for teacher education, how is change which is responsive to the future needs of teachers and learners possible? How can such changes be planned and implemented?
3. Which components of our traditional model of teacher education need to be re-examined as we plan for change? What organizational patterns are more appropriate for the future?
4. What should be the role of research in teacher education?
5. How must leaders within teacher education institutions approach change in a proactive, futuristic way.

The first question to be addressed is: <u>What should be the goals for teacher education as we move into the twenty-first century?</u> An examination of the recent literature would suggest that our goals should focus on extending the length of preservice preparation and providing both preservice and inservice teachers with a research base for their classroom practices. Will these two thrusts be enough to adequately prepare educators for future challenges?

Those who have focused on an examination of the broader view of the future of society and on education's place in that society would claim that our goals are hopelessly short sighted. Of primary concern must be the development of more desirable charateristics of teachers for the future an the anticipation of a wider context for the application of skills, knowledge, attitudes and values learned.

In extending the strong reconstructionist tradition of Dewey, Counts, and Brameld, futurists have echoed the theme that change in schooling has come after-the-fact, as a reaction to prior cultural change. Futurists are involved with examining how the current models for education can be altered--sometimes on a grand scale--to more nearly reflect a perspective which acknowledges and takes a proactive stance toward the future. Most futurists envision radically new contexts for education. They support Harmon's (1977) transformation scenario and reject the extrapolistic notion which would project our current concept of schooling into the twenty-first century (see, for example, Amara, 1981; Bowman, Kierstead, Dede, & Pulliam, 1978; Ferguson, 1980; Pulliam &

Bowman, 1974; Theobald, 1976; Toffler, 1974, 1980).

An analysis of futures research revealed that a contrasting set of assumptions regarding teacher education could be drawn (see Table 1). Implicit in these assumptions is a matrix of beliefs which underlie a futuristic paradigm for teacher education. First, the matrix of beliefs upon which futures research rests clearly supports "liberation" as the aim of education.

Macdonald (1977) identified three aims or directions of education: socialization, development, and liberation. Socialization relates to the training potential of schooling. "It is the acceptance of the status quo by definition and the replication of the present social class and role structure, ethos, and attitudinal sets by the most efficient and effective methods possible" (p. 16). The development aim, which reflects an organismic or biological metaphor, "has a direct relationship to the status of the elite or advanced group . . . . Maturity, in other words . . . is defined by the 'mature' members of the society as being 'like us'" (p. 17). Macdonald identified the third aim as liberation. "It is the aim of freeing persons from the parochialness of their specific times an places and opening up the possibilities for persons to create themselves and their societies" (p. 17). This last aim embodies the value orientation of futures research.

A second key construct and one which clearly separates this paradigm from existing ones is the recognition that educational endeavors are taking place within a community which is global in scope and interdependent in nature. Futurists argue that educational decisions can no longer be made in isolation--for a community (in the narrow sense meaning "city" or "village"), for a state, or for a country, but within the context of the global community.

Given the present organizational framework for teacher education, how is change which is responsive to the future needs of teachers and learners possible? Rather than adopting a coping or reactive strategy, society as a whole and individuals within society must anticipate change, recognize change forces at work, use change to help solve problems, and use proactive strategies to cause certain changes to take place. Perpetuation of the status quo or resistance to newness would be seen as contrary to the aim of education.

Learning would then be redefined as the process of preparing to deal with new sitations (Botkin, Elmandjra, & Malitza, 1979), and learners would anticipate rather than adapt to changing circumstances. Further, learners would participate in the arena of change. Such an approach to learning would imply an openness and a tentative stance. What is learned might be revised or updated at any moment. Learners would welcome new information and realize that the learning process is continual and life-long.

In addition, those preparing for the education profession need to develop a sense of collegiality with

others involved in similar tasks. A sense of cooperation, rather than competition, must pervade teacher education. How can we expect inservice teachers to share, work together, team teach, or be involved in helping other teachers improve their practice if teachers are education in a competitive program?

Consistent with this proactive stance toward change, futurists place a high priority on human abilities to affect the course of the future, to consider and solved problems which will arise, and to use technology appropriately to assist in the solution of societal and individual dilemmas.

Change in teacher education program could take several forms. First, educators for the present and the future need to know how systems work and what knowledge, skills, and attitudes may be effective in bringing about change within systems. A "can do" attitude about one's own education and career choice is essential if preservice and inservice teacher to maintain their future focus. Second, students must be involved in goal setting and program planning based on their interests, life experiences, strengths, and targeted areas for growth. As part of the educational experience. would-be educators and those seeking renewal need to identify and explore the values and attitudes needed for an extended, productive, and fulfilling career as a professional educator. Goal setting and an exploration of the probable changes in education are essential.

Which components of our traditional model of teacher education (liberal arts-pedagogy-clinical experience) need to re-examined as we plan for change? What organizational patterns are more appropriate for the future?

Each and all components of our traditional models need re-examination.

1. The rapidly expanding knowledge base demands that teachers will never be able to be experts in everything again; therefore, preparation programs need to emphasize how learners gain access to information, how they use information, and how they create new knowledge.

2. The pedagogy component of the current model combines both the art and science of teaching and learning. Recently, the emphasis on methodolgy over philosophical foundations has increased. The role the teacher will play in the future is multi-faceted and at this point, less than predictable. Schooling as we presently know and experience it is a narrow, restricting concept. Preparing students for life in a classroom is dangerously short-sighted. Contexts for teaching and learning are expanding and diversifying. We must provide students with sound foundations, encourage continuing inquiry, and provide both scientific data and impetus for artistic expression.

3. The clinically based model for teacher education, by its very nature, perpetuates the status quo. Students who enter a standardarized prgram are often treated alike, given the same doses of course work and field experiences. Environments in which they "practice" are constrained.

Research concerning student teaching is contradictory and limited (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984). The extent to which students are socialized into the profession and the degree to which they adopt the teaching style and methodology of their school-based cooperating teachers needs to be explored. We do know that students have little opportunity to explore a large variety of models and careful placement of student teachers is often not possible. The effects of the clinical experiences--both early clinical experiences as well as student teaching--and the relationship of these experiences to the rest of the teacher education program need to be researched further, especially within individual institutions.

What should be the role of research in teacher education? The recent emphasis on reseach-based teacher education (Smith, 1983; Clark, 1984) focuses on what we currently "know" about present-day classroom teaching. In addition to knowing what *is*, we need to consider *what might be*, *what could be*. Teacher educators and those in the process of becoming educators need to adopt a broad definition of what research relates to teaching. By focusing only on the emerging body of information about teaching or the classroom narrows our focus to the present. Futures research, its value base, and the implications for teaching and learning, both now and in the future is significant. Of high priority would be the development of an inquiring stance about world issues, national issues, and emerging research in the behavioral and social sciences. Both what we know and what we will come to know are important.

How must leaders within teacher educatiors approach change in a proactive, futuristic way?

While many writers recognize the potential of our educaional institutions to play a crucial role in shaping the future of society, Pinnell (1983), after reviewing the insights and ideas of futures thinkers, concluded that "the majority of educational institutions have not faced up to the probable future which lies ahead" (p. 19). Institutions must commit themselves to exploring the future--the future of the instiution itself, the futures of faculty and students within the institution, and the futures of children.

We need leadership in teacher education. Leaders need to engage in imaging activities--to talk not just about what is, but what could be. They need to encourage goal setting and seeking--for their institutions, their faculties, and their students. We need to think big--to explore possibilities and alternatives rather than narrowing our options.

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Table 1

Contrasting Assumptions Regarding Teacher Education

Traditional Assumptions	Futuristic Assumptions
Content oriented; subject-centered curriculum.	Person-centered curriculum; focus on relationships. Subject matter available on databank systems.
"Vaccination theory"; a dose of everything for everyone.	Students involved in structuring program and experiences. Early identification of strengths and weaknesses; growth and enrichment emphasis.
Convergence (sameness).	Divergence (experience to be offered will involve selection and choice).
Authority in bureaucratic structure, position-based.	Authority is knowledge-based; students are participants in governing institution and programs which are viable, flexible, and responsive to individual and societal needs.
Transmission of existing cultural values.	Exploration of alternative value systems existing in the present and possibilities for the future.
Downward communication patterns.	Two-way, transactional communication.
Either/or orientation; students exposed to one philosophy, theory or school of thought.	Both/and orientation; students presented with eclectic approach to both knowledge and theory, encouraged to go beyond the professor/facilitator's boundaries, explore new territory.
Power orientation; "my students" are assigned grades.	Non-possessive, non-judgmental environment; power rests with each individual.
Training orientation — trainers pass on information to "trainees."	Education orientation — each person in the process seeking his/her own information.
Competitive environment.	Collegial, cooperative environment; students learning with and from one another.
Segmented curriculum and course work.	Integration of interdisciplinary courses; emphasis on connections.
Liberal arts work separated from education sequence.	Integration, complementary and reciprocal relationship between all fields of knowledge.
Conforming, emphasis on "right" answers and approaches.	Freeing, emphasis on multiple answers and approaches.
"Finished products."	Unfinished, growing persons who are professionals still in the process of becoming educators.
Vocational training for earning a living.	Educational experiences part of the lifelong learning process.
Methods, static planning procedures.	Repertoire of strategies developed which are applicable to a variety of contexts and settings.
Credentialing goal.	No credentialing goal.
School based.	Life based; many contexts for learning are experienced.
Mass production mentality.	Emphasis on the person within the process.
Givens, solutions.	Everything in flux; uncertainties, problems.
Sequential.	Topical.
Learning about the philosophies and theories of others.	Developing a philosophy of one's own.
Answering questions.	Questioning.

Tafel (1984)

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